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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 AS-01 ISO-00 CU-02
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05
IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /109 W
----------071804 240925Z /23
R 240405Z JUN 77
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8063
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1281

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, EAID, CH, SU

SUBJ: NIMEIRI VISIT TO CHINA

REF: (A) KHARTOUM 2040; (B) PEKING 1140

1. SUMMARY: SUDANESE PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S JUNE 6-16 VISIT TO CHINA WAS A POLITICAL AND PROPAGANDA EVENT WHICH SERVED THE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES. THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRIP PROBABLY OVERSHADOWED ANY CONCRETE AGREEMENTS ON TRADE AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE, DETAILS OF WHICH ARE SCANTY. END SUMMARY.

2. NIMEIRI VISIT PROVIDED CHINESE WITH UNEQUALLED OPPORTUNITY TO BLAST SOVIET AFRICAN POLICY, AND THEY SHOWED NO HESITATION IN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF IT. IN ADDITION TO VICE PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN'S TOAST AT THE WELCOMING BANQUET
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(REF B), PRC MEDIA THROUGHOUT THE VISIT CONTINUED A BARRAGE OF ARTICLES AND COMMENTARIES ON HOW THE SUDANESE ACTION IN EXPELLING SOVIET MILITARY ADVISERS WAS POINTING THE WAY FOR OTHERS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SUPER-POWER HEGEMONISM. STATEMENTS AND INTERVIEWS BY SUDANESE OFFICIALS BOTH HERE AND IN KHARTOUM ALSO SERVED THE SAME PURPOSE, AND WERE DULY QUOTED BY

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3. MOST STRIKING EXAMPLE OF THIS PROPAGANDA WAVE WAS JUNE 16 PEOPLE'S DAILY COMMENTARY REACTING TO A TASS CRITICISM OF THE NIMEIRI TRIP. THE COMMENTARY CITED TASS' ACCUSATION THAT SUDAN AND OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES WERE "REACTIONARY" HAS EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE HOSTILE TO "THE MILLIONS OF ARAB PEOPLE" IN THE REGION. BY NOT ATTEMPTING TO REFUTE THE "REACTIONARY" CHARGE ITSELF, PELING SEEMED TO BE SIG-NALLING THAT IT WILL SUPPORT COUNTRIES LIKE SUDAN AGAINST THE SOVIETS, REGARDLESS OF THE POLITICAL COMPLEXION OF THEIR INTERNAL REGIMES.

4. IN CONTRAST TO THE PROPAGANDA VERBIAGE, INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONCRETE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE VISIT IS SCANTY. THE CHINESE APPARENTLY PROMISED IN PRINCIPLE TO SUPPORT SUDAN'S NEW SIX-YEAR PLAN,AND THE TWO COUNTRIES SET UP THREE MIXED COMMISSIONS TO DISCUSS COOPERATION IN THE ECONOMIC POLITICAL, AND MILITARY FIELDS. IN CONVERSATION WITH USLO OFFICER, SUDANESE MILATT GAVE ONLY VAGUE RESPONSE IN REPLY TO QUESTION ABOUT MILITARY COOPERATION, BUT INDICATED THAT PRC HAD AGREED TO SUPPLY SPARE PARTS FOR SIXTY M-62 TANKS THEY HAD ORIGINALLY GIVEN SUDAN IN 1970. WHILE WE HAVE HEARD RUMORS OF OTHER MILITAY ASSISTANCE , WE HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

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BEEN UNABLE TO LEARN ANY DETAILS.

5. COMMENT: SINCE THE PRC IS IN THE MIDST OF A DEBATE ABOUT THE RELATIVE PRIORITIES OF ITS OWN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY INVESTMENTS, IT MAY BE UNWILL-ING TO MAKE ANY LARGE-SCALE COMMITMENTS ON EITHER ECONOMIC OR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. NEVERTHELESS, THE ANTI-SOVIET AURA OF THE TEN-DAY VISIT PRESUMABLY SERVES THE POLITICAL PURPOSES OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS, AND THE TRIP WILL NO DOUBT BE CONSIDERED A SUCCESS.
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